

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
George C. Marshall Space Flight Center
Marshall Space Flight Center, AL 35812



September 17, 2008

Reply to Attn of:

LS01 (WAC)

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

FROM: LS01/ William J. Bierbower

SUBJECT: Approval for MSFC Employees with Senior Institutional or Project Responsibilities to Attend the 20th Annual Dr. Wernher Von Braun Memorial Dinner

In accordance with 5 CFR. § 2635.204(g)(2) and (3), I make the following determination:

Certain MSFC employees with senior institutional or project responsibilities have been invited to attend the 20th Annual Dr. Wernher Von Braun Memorial Dinner, sponsored by The National Space Club (NSC), scheduled for Wednesday, October 22, 2008, at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center Davidson Center for Space Exploration.

NSC was founded on October 4, 1957, to stimulate the exchange of ideas and information about rocketry and astronautics and to promote recognition of U.S. achievements in space. NSC is a non-profit corporation comprised of representatives from industry, government, educational institutions, and private individuals.

This event will be a widely-attended gathering of aerospace industry representatives and local elected officials, as well as, other community leaders. Besides 198 MSFC employees, Federal officials invited include employees of the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command, Redstone Arsenal, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command and the Missile Defense Agency. The event is valued at \$75.00 per person and approximately 1000 individuals have been invited to attend. The event is fully funded by contributions from NSC. I find that the event meets the requirements of a "widely attended gathering" as defined in 5 CFR § 2635.204(g)(2).

Most of NSC's members are companies that are currently providing contractual services to NASA, or will seek to provide contractual services to NASA in the future.¹ Some MSFC personnel invited to attend this event presently, or may in the near future, have extensive involvement in matters relating to members of NCS in their pursuit to provide,

¹ See file for listing of NSC corporate membership.

or seek to provide, contractual services to NASA.² These personnel are similarly situated in that they each have senior institutional or project responsibilities that could significantly influence current or future contracts for a majority of the NSC's corporate members. Alternatively, they may have duties that could significantly affect the interests of the NSC itself.

I have determined that free attendance of these senior institutional and project leaders at the event is in the interests of the agency because it will further agency programs and operations. The attendance of these senior NASA employees at the event will help to raise NASA's profile with local business and governmental leaders, will contribute to community relations, and will support NASA's statutory mandate to disseminate information about its programs.

Given the purpose of the event, NASA's interest in it, the broad attendance anticipated, and the modest market value of the event, I have determined that the value to the agency in having these senior institutional and project leaders attend this event outweighs any concern that free attendance may or may appear to improperly influence them in the performance of their duties.

Accordingly, NASA employees in the positions identified above may accept free attendance at the event. They may also accept invitations for accompanying spouses or guests.

Questions about this determination may be addressed to Bill Cassels at 256-544-0904.


William J. Bierbower
Chief Counsel

² Center Director; Deputy Center Director; Associate Center Director; Director, Office of Procurement; Deputy Director, Office of Procurement; Supervisor, External Relations Office; Specialist, Office of Government & Community Relations. Chief Counsel; Deputy Chief Counsel; Assistant Chief Counsel for Contracts; Chief Financial Officer; Deputy Chief Financial Officer; Director, Office of Strategic Analysis & Communications.